



Toonagh National School

Assessment Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated in 2009. It was revised by the teaching staff during February, 2018. It was further reviewed during April- June 2022.

Rationale

The purpose of this Assessment Policy is to ensure a uniform approach to assessment and record keeping throughout the school so as to enhance teaching and learning.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Toonagh N.S. seeks to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This work can best be done where there is a high level of openness and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils. We believe that our assessment and record keeping will enhance our work.

Aims of this Policy

By introducing and implementing this policy we hope:

- To benefit pupil learning
- To monitor learning processes
- To generate baseline data that can be used to monitor achievement over time
- To identify and manage the learning strengths and needs of our students
- To assist teachers' long and short term planning
- To coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis

Content of Policy:

The purposes of assessment

The purposes of assessment in our school are as follows.

- To inform planning for, and coverage of, all areas of the curriculum
- To gather and interpret data at class/whole school level and in relation to national norms
- To identify the particular learning needs of pupils/groups of pupils including the exceptionally able
- To contribute to the school's strategy for prevention of learning difficulties
- To monitor pupil progress and attainment
- To enable teachers to modify their programmes in order to ensure that the particular learning needs of individual pupils/groups are being addressed
- To compile records of individual pupils' progress and attainment
- To facilitate communication between parents and teachers about pupils' development, progress and learning needs
- To facilitate the involvement of pupils in assessment of their own work
- To enable teachers to monitor their own approaches and methodologies

Assessment Methods

Toonagh N.S. recognises the formative, summative, evaluative and diagnostic functions of assessment. Our approach to assessment focuses on two principle, interrelated and complementary approaches namely Assessment for Learning (AFL) and Assessment of Learning (AOL) at all class levels. This means that evidence is used on an on-going basis to inform teaching and learning (AFL) in addition to the periodic recording of children's progress and achievements, for the purpose of reporting (AOL). The school acknowledges the importance of a concentrated ,sustained focus on Assessment, the key characteristics of which we identify as follows:

- The sharing of learning intentions with pupils;
- Assisting pupils in identifying and recognising the standards being aimed for;
- Involving pupils in self-assessment and peer assessment
- Providing pupils with feedback which will lead them to recognise the next steps in their learning and how to take them;
- The promotion of confidence in pupils;
- Involvement of teacher and pupil in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information

In Toonagh National School , the key classroom strategies that we consider essential to assessment are:

- Teacher observation
 - *Responses children make to teachers*
 - *The participation and interaction of pupils in whole class or group based activity*
 - *The reaction of children to content and teaching strategies.*
- Teachers record specific strengths or challenges .
- Error analysis
- Teacher designed tasks and tests for all curricular areas areas
- Standardised Tests: *The Drumcondra Maths and English tests are administered to all classes 1st to 6th, annually. The results are shared with parents in writing with the end of year report.(See below) The Drumcondra Early Literacy test and The Drumcondra Early Numeracy Test are administered to Senior Infant students.*
- Concept mapping to enable pupils, with the assistance of the teacher, to reflect on his/her work. Discussion of work through directed teacher questioning in 1-1, small groups and whole-class settings.
- Questioning to enable pupils experience a range of questions to assess the progress she /he is making in learning. A variety of questions are used to assess developing understanding of new learning; these range from closed questions , to more open questions to help promote higher order thinking
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Digital Portfolios using Seesaw.
- Self- assessment(KWL Grids)
- WILF and WALT
- Peer assessment ,Think/Pair/ Share,Thumbs up/ thumbs down
- Mind -mapping
- Homework
- Parental/ pupil feedback
- Teachers ' end of year report

Assessment information on pupils in Toonagh N.S. is maintained through teacher observation notes, AOL tasks and tests, Seesaw Digital Portfolios and Pupil Profile details posted on Aladdin. End of year reports are shared with parents and maintained on Aladdin, and the School Passport for 6th class students are shared with parents and forwarded to the relevant Secondary Schools. Diagnostic tests are administered by the SEN team in September of each year and results are shared with the relevant class teachers and with parents, if necessary. Records of attainment in these tests is recorded and maintained in the Students' SEN File.

Standardised Tests

- The BIAP is used to identify early difficulties. It is administered to Junior Infants between January and March of second term
- The Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy in Reading and Maths are administered at the end of Senior Infants.
- The Drumcondra English and Maths assessment tests are administered in all classes 1-6
- Class teachers in co-ordination with SEN teachers are responsible for the purchase, distribution and co-ordination of testing
- The teachers will administer the standardised tests
- As a rule tests to be administered to all pupils
- In exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the guidelines in Circular 0138/2006 students not taking the tests will be accommodated in one of the other classrooms
- Raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN and Reading age to be recorded.
- Class teachers and SEN teacher to be involved in the analysis of results at an individual class level. Principal and SEN teacher to analyse results at whole school level
- Information gathered from tests is used to inform teaching and learning through a differentiated curriculum in the classroom and through access for students to School Support/ School Support Plus intervention where their programme of work will focus on strengths and difficulties highlighted by tests
- Results of Standardised Assessments to be communicated orally to parents at Parent - Teacher Meetings in November.
- Parents are given STEN score and a descriptor
- The descriptor will help parents to understand the test results
- In combination with the other forms of assessment used in the school the results of Standardised tests will be used to additional support those students in need

Screening:

- The BIAP is used to facilitate the early identification of ' learning strengths / difficulties
- The BIAP is administered between January and March in the second term of Junior Infants
- The Drumcondra tests of early literacy and numeracy are administered during the last term in Senior Infants.
- The class teacher administers these tests
- The WIAT III is administered where appropriate (Or subtests within it)
- The GL Dyslexia Screener is administered where there is appropriate indication that a student may have an SLD.

- The class teacher and SEN teachers are involved in the interpretation of the results of these tests
- We fully endorse and practise early intervention in our school. Where concerns are raised as a result of these screening tests the class teacher devises a short intervention programme for the student-Stage 1- Classroom Support
- Following the appropriate intervention period, the child's progress will be reviewed and assessed and if the student has not made sufficient progress or failed to meet the targets set out in the intervention plan/programme within the specified time, the class teacher (following consultation with the SEN teachers) will recommend to the child's parents that diagnostic testing by the SEN teachers is necessary

Diagnostic Assessment:

Formal diagnostic tests chosen appropriately from the following list are administered by the SEN teachers to determine the appropriate support provision for individual pupils who present with learning difficulties

- The PHAB battery of tests
- The Drumcondra diagnostic tests of early numeracy and literacy
- First Links Assessment and Evaluation
- Assessment of Tricky Words (Jolly Phonics)
- Tests to be used for pupils at the early reading or emergent literacy stage measure: print awareness, print conventions, letter identification, knowledge of letter sounds, word-recognition, word-identification skills, spelling and writing
- The student's comprehension at word and sentence level is also measured. A running record is taken of each child's Reading where this is possible.
- The PAST test of Phonological Awareness

Where students have moved beyond the early stage of Reading diagnostic assessment will include the following

- Analysis of performance on Drumcondra Reading Test
- Aston Index
- Drumcondra Spelling Test
- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
- Sound Linkage test of Phonological Awareness
- Jackson Phonics Test
- Nonsense Word Test
- PM Reading Assessment
- STAR Reading Assessment (3rd -6th)
- SNIP Literacy Programme Checklists
- A running record of each student's oral reading is taken with the focus being on systematic analysis of pupils difficulties (miscue analysis)
- A qualitative assessment of the student is also made with the emphasis being on analysing general attitude to Reading, the student's motivation to learn and general Reading behaviours

Diagnostic assessment in Maths will include a detailed analysis of the students' performance on the Drumcondra Maths test. Maths support/ intervention will focus on the following

- Computation of number
- Understanding of Mathematical concepts

- Understanding Maths Language
- Problem solving strategies
- Recall of number facts(Tables)
- Mathematical reasoning skills
- Skill at representing Mathematical ideas
- Maths Tracker Level 1-3
- Maths Tracker Senior Levels 4-6
- The SEN teachers will observe the pupil as he/she completes a sequential series of Maths operations. Errors in written work will be analysed and information gathered will inform the future programme of work
- Talkabout Programme - Social Skills Assessment (3rd -6th)
- The SEN teachers interprets the results of these tests and consults with the class teacher to create a complete picture of the child's strengths and needs and the process of drawing up a programme of work for the child is initiated. The results of these diagnostic tests in conjunction with the teachers analysis of the child's needs dictate the learning plan devised for the student.
- The parents are then invited into the school where they will meet with the class teacher and the SEN teachers and the results of diagnostic testing are shared with the parents. Following this the child's intervention programme is discussed and parents are offered an opportunity to suggest targets for inclusion in the programme
- The criteria to be used when deciding which pupils will receive supplementary teaching: School Support (Stage 2) and School Support Plus (Stage 3) are outlined in our schools Special Education Needs Policy.
- In Toonagh National School we have a policy of early intervention. Priority will be given to students in the Junior section of the school (senior infants to second class)
- When the above two categories are catered for the remaining SEN time will be at the discretion of the principal

Psychological Assessment

- Following diagnostic testing a psychological assessment may be deemed necessary. In this case the parents are asked for permission to allow their child to go forward for Psychological Testing. The SEN teachers will liaise with the Psychologist to set up a date for the assessment and time and date will be forwarded to the parents who will be asked to complete the relevant NEPS forms. The teacher in conjunction with the SEN teachers will complete their portion of the NEPS form. The forms once completed are forwarded to the psychologist
- Where it is necessary to request and arrange an assessment from another specialist the SEN teacher, following agreement from the parents will set this up.
- Alternatively the parent may set up an assessment through liaising with their family doctor or by contacting the local assessment officer responsible for co-ordinating the Assessment of Need procedures.
- The recommendations, in the ensuing assessment, will be carefully considered by all partners in the drawing up of the intervention programme for the student.
- Psychological reports are stored in the students' individual file in the locked filing cabinet in the Principal's office.

Recording the results of assessment (*Consult Policy on Data Protection and Record Keeping for specific information on recording, storage and transfer of information*)

based on Standardised Tests, Screening Tests, Diagnostic Tests and other assessment material)

- All students' written results of Standardised testing are maintained on Aladdin .
- Other assessment results are kept in the students' individual files. It is imperative that that comments relevant to the student are recorded in an objective, constructive and instructive manner.
- Special care is taken of sensitive data which is always kept securely locked in the filing cabinet of the Principal's office

Exceptionally-able pupils

School procedures to identify exceptionally-able pupils include teacher observation, standardised tests, work samples and conferencing.

Teachers endeavour to meet the needs of exceptionally-able pupils through the use of differentiation by outcomes, tasks, resources and grouping. Alternative, more challenging textbooks may be used in addition to greater focus on problem- solving and the extension of activities where possible.

Measúnú sa Ghaeilge:

Is cuid lárnach de phróiseas teagaisc agus foghlama na Gaeilge é an measúnú. Is fiú measúnú leanúnach a dhéanamh ar na scileanna teanga go léir ionas go mbeidh an múinteoir in ann pleanáil chuí a dhéanamh. Seo hiad na húirlisí a bheidh in úsáid againn:

- Dírbhreathnú an mhúinteora ar an bpáiste - msh: An féidir leis an bpáiste tuairisciú a dhéanamh nó an féidir leis an bpáiste pictúir nó rud a aithint/ainmniú?
- Tascanna agus trialacha deartha ag an múinteoir
- Bailiúchán d'obair an pháiste
- Breathnóireacht agus na páistí ag caint agus ag obair i mbeirteanna/i ngrupaí
- Piarmheasúnú
- Féinmheasúnú a scríbhneoireacht msh seicliostaí (nuair ata aiste/píosa gaird scríofa ag na páistí)
- Tuiscint a sheiceáil - Órdóg Suas/Síos, Cartaí Glasa/Dearga
- Machnamh Foghlama (Déanann na páistí machnamh ar ar fhoghlaim siad sa cheacht msh: Inniú d'fhoghlaim mé, Bhí suim again in, Ní thuigim go fóill.....srl)

Success Criteria

The success of the policy will be measured by how smoothly and efficiently the process of assessment runs throughout the school. A range of formal and informal assessment modes should be central to the process of placing assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. Because each partner's role is so clearly laid out in the policy there should be clarity about what is expected and who is responsible for different aspects of the policy. Transfer of information from the various class teachers should happen efficiently at the beginning of the school year. The aims of the policy should be achieved seamlessly. As a result of the screening process those students most in need would receive supplementary teaching at the earliest possible time. Benefitting pupil learning is central to the whole process.

Roles and Responsibilities

The SEN teachers in conjunction with the Principal and the teaching staff has the responsibility of co-ordinating this policy.

Implementation Date

These procedures will apply from 1st September 2022

Timetable for Review

The operation of the new procedures contained in this policy will be reviewed in two years following the date of implementation of the policy. If amendments are necessary before this date they will be made following agreement by the staff. The SEN teachers will co-ordinate this review of the policy

Ratification:

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Toonagh National School at its meeting on 28/02/2018.

Signed: Marie Slattery
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 28/02/2018

Donnchadh Kelleher
(Principal)

Update and Review:

This Policy was updated and reviewed by the Board of Management of Toonagh National School on 22/06/2022

Signed: Marie Slattery
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 22/06/2022

Seasid Boylan
(Principal)